

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

Art's Birthday

Featuring *The Wet Secrets*, *Illfit Outfit*, *David McCallum*, and *Shawn Pinchbeck*
17 January at 7pm
ARTery (99535 Jasper Avenue)

Only at events like this one can you have your metaphorical cake and then eat some actual cake too. While one wouldn't normally think *The Wet Secrets* would go well with icing, the Film And Video Arts Society of Alberta (FAVA) are ready to prove you wrong and are throwing themselves a 25th birthday party that features several musical performances while you enjoy a delicious bunt (or other assorted cake-like confectionary).

Necro

With *Psycho Realm*, *Danny Diablo*, *Boondox*, and *Rivera Regime*
Friday, 18 January at 8pm
Starlite Room, 18+

Inventor of the mortality-influenced subgenre death rap, Necro—born Ron Braunstein—is well known throughout the world of hip-hop for his extremely violent and explicit lyrics, as well as his do-it-yourself mentality when it comes to promotion.

Holding the joint honour of owning all the masters to all his albums and creating the first hip-hop song about human body disposal, Necro has released such classics of his genre as *I Need Drugs* and *The Sexorcist*, and is currently touring to support his latest release, *Death Rap*, which leaves the preoccupation with sex in the past and thankfully returns to simple gore and dismemberment.

Gob

With *This is a Standoff* and *Ending Alexander*
Saturday, 19 January at 8pm
Jet Nightclub

Time's been a mixed blessing to Canadian pop-punkers Gob. Gone are that genre's carefree days of yore, where a fun little riff and a video about playing soccer against zombies to rescue a babe could make you a star on MuchMusic. Since then, they've had to deal with a decline in radioplay and losing a band member to Avril Lavigne—and I'm sure they've been through Edmonton before, but probably somewhere a little more prestigious than Jet Nightclub.

However, their 2003 album *Foot in Mouth Disease* did particularly well in Japan, and spurred on by the success, the boys are touring in support of their latest album, *Muertos Vivos*. If they're lucky, maybe some ancient fans from their heyday will rise from the ground and rock out, zombie style, giving the band a chance to prove both their rock and soccer skills once more.

The Canoe Theatre Festival

Runs 22–26 January
3rd Space (11516 103 Street) and the Timms Centre (87 Ave & 112 Street)

Part of the Workshop West 07/08 True Grit season, the Canoe Theatre Festival features five separate acclaimed productions from across Canada. The variety of shows includes *Water*, which looks at the depleting global water supply; *Fish Eyes*, a coming-of-age story featuring Bollywood dancing; *The Cloister*, a look into the life of 13th-century nun Hildegard von Bingen; *The Misfit*, another Bollywood-style story about a woman running away to India; and finally, a solo performance of *Hamlet*, with one actor playing all 17 roles in the play.

JOHN KMECH & PAUL BLINOV
Dreadlacked and sideburned



Elephants heading for the Hills

Local act Hills Like White Elephants deliver their first album—which might also be their last

musicpreview

Hills Like White Elephants CD Release Party

With Doug Hoyer and Arsh Khaira
Saturday, 19 January at 7pm
McDougal United Church

PAUL BLINOV
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Hills Like White Elephants have been a band since 2004, and those four years have been marked by some impressive highlights: a cross-Canada tour with rising stars The Acorn and playing Calgary's Sled Island Festival. But now, on the eve of their first album's release, the atmospheric, orchestral band might be making a trip to the elephant graveyard.

"All of us are full-time students, and we haven't practiced in three months; we played a show back in September, and then we took a bunch of time off," sighs Chris Blackmore, lead guitarist and vocalist for the band. "[It's] just they way everybody's lives are looking, particularly me: I'll be going on a trip in May to India for about a month, and then I think I'll be moving to Korea next year."

That said, their first and possibly only full-length album, *Himalaya*, isn't a self-defeated goodbye; the album was a much more focused and prepared effort than their first self-titled release.

"I think this album is what we wanted out of [the band], and it's probably the best we'll do

with this kind of arrangement," he says. "Our EP was recorded about a month after we wrote those songs. Some of them were pretty rusty; we'd just finished learning to play them before we went in [to the studio]."

On that first EP, Hills Like White Elephants consisted of four primary members—Blackmore, guitarist Stefan Dehod, drummer Mike Kropinski, and bassist Jim Cumming. But in the live setting, the band now swells 5–8 performers.

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CHRIS BLACKMORE

HILLS LIKE WHITE ELEPHANTS VOCALIST/GUITARIST

Their MySpace page now lists seven regular members and another sub-group of eight more. According to Blackmore, it's this satellite ring of sometimes-bandmates that really make the band's sound diverse, and on *Himalaya*, had more input than ever.

"It's actually kind of hard to say who's in the band," Blackmore jokingly admits. "But apart from some skeletons of songs we had, a ton of things changed [in recording *Himalaya*]; [violinist] Janet Chung had a huge part; Eric Cheng had a huge part in producing and arranging. I don't read music, and apart from

some very general ideas, we let them have free reign.

"I think that the four of us contribute the basic part of the song, and the rest of the band makes it actually interesting," he laughs. "That's how we work."

Himalaya was recorded in a much more relaxed setting, working in producer Eric Cheng's studio, where time wasn't an issue. Additionally, they had the added bonus of coming off a Canada-wide tour, where they could really work the kinks out of their new songs, making recording so much easier.

"This time around, we got in the tour and a bunch of shows, so we played the songs almost to death—hundreds of times," Blackmore says.

"So everything was very tight. [It was] easy to get good takes. In terms of recording atmosphere, it was the same kind of schtick: we've recorded with Eric before, and it was a daytime suite studio. So it wasn't particularly intimidating, and we weren't paying by the hour or anything. It was pretty relaxed.

"We recorded piecemeal [bits]," he continues. "I think we started sometime in late May, and one or two of us would drop in when we had spare moments over the summer. One or two of us would record some tracks."

Even if *Himalaya* ends up being his band's goodbye, it's one that that Blackmore can be proud to leave behind as the band goes over the hills and far away.

"The way I look at it, I'd rather really concentrate on something and make something I can look back on, and not keep it rolling until it drags its foot into the grave. Just go out on a good point."